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GuideStone seeks info on retirees

GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention is aware that a number of Mississippians may experience interruptions in mail delivery for an extended period due to Hurricane Katrina.

If you or a family member is a retired minister, staff member, or widow who has received a monthly retirement check in the past, and had your check delivered to your home rather than by electronic deposit, please contact GuideStone at (800) 262-0511.

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SEP 22 2005

Miss. CP rises in August

Gifts to the work of the Lord through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) in August showed an increase when compared both to giving last month and for the same period in 2004, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the funds. The August total of \$2,917,261 is 27.3% higher than the \$2,291,652 given last month, and 34.6% higher than the \$2,167,534 given in the same period in 2004. Total Mississippi CP giving for the current fiscal year, which runs from January-December, stands at \$21,865,364, which is 6.2% above last year's giving during the same period and 4.7% ahead of current year budget needs. The 2005 Mississippi CP budget of \$31,314,491, was approved by messengers to the 2004 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. A total of \$2,609,541 is needed each month to meet the convention board's budget for 2005. In addition to helping support more than 10,700 missionaries in the U.S. and around the world through affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, Mississippi CP also helps fund such programs as the MBCB Men's Ministry Department that is currently coordinating the Hurricane Katrina disaster relief effort in Mississippi; the State Handbell Seminar on September 16 at Hillcrest Church, Byram; and the National Sunday School Directors' Seminar on September 23-24 at First Church, Brandon East Campus.

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Editor

As Mississippi Baptist disaster relief plans shift into long-term mode across the hurricane-stricken Gulf Coast, a special telephone hotline and e-mail address have been announced for those who want more information on how to get involved.

The disaster relief volunteer hotline number is (601) 292-3206, and the e-mail address is mbcbdisasterrelief@mbcb.org, said Jim Didlake, director of men's ministry and coordinator of disaster relief ministries at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

Anyone interested in volunteering or contributing financially to the Hurricane Katrina disaster relief effort can make contact with the Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force at the hotline telephone number and e-mail address. Secondary contact numbers are (601) 503-7517, and (601) 672-2772.

"We are taking names and assigning volunteers as quickly as we can. We are asking callers to be patient; volunteers will be placed in the areas where they are needed the most as soon as we can get them in," Didlake said.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is currently accepting donations to fund the long-term Mississippi Baptist disaster relief effort along the Gulf Coast. Fully 100% of the donations will be used for hurricane relief. Checks should be made payable to MBCB, with "Hurricane Relief" noted on the memo line, and mailed to: MBCB Business Office, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Meanwhile, the Task Force's main feeding unit — a fully self-contained tractor/trailer capable of preparing more than 10,000 meals per day — remains stationed at First Church, Biloxi, while trained chainsaw crews, medical teams, cleanup groups, and child care units from Mississippi Baptist churches fan out to minister in the Gulf Coast area.



FEEDING THE MASSES — Storm victims from every walk of life wait in line for a hot meal on September 7 at First Church, Pascagoula, provided by a Georgia Baptist Convention mass feeding unit stationed at the church. Southern Baptist disaster relief units prepared over one million meals in Mississippi in the first week following Hurricane Katrina's landfall. (BR photo by Tony Martin)

"In addition to the mass feeding unit, Mississippi Baptists are distributing tons of foodstuffs, diapers, cleaning supplies, and other items that are very much in need by the victims of the hurricane. Mississippi Baptist chainsaw crews have completed more than 2,400 requests for help. The medical teams are treating people, writing prescriptions, and administering shots as needed.

"I want to say a special thanks to the tremendous response of Mississippi Baptists to this disaster. They could not be better in giving and volunteering," Didlake said.

Don Gann, consultant in the MBCB Men's Ministry Department, said more than 20 mass feeding units from state Baptist conventions are in Mississippi, and many individual Mississippi Baptist churches are feeding people in their local areas independent of the state and national response. There are

also specialized Baptist disaster relief units working in the state that are offering disaster victims such services as portable showers, clothes washing, and communications.

Mickey Caison, who coordinates Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts for the North American Mission Board in Atlanta, estimated that more than 235 Southern Baptist disaster relief units from 35 states were involved at the peak of the three-state relief effort, with thousands of Baptist volunteers staffing the units.

The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Task Force is funded by gifts to the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering, and supported administratively by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program. For the latest information on the Mississippi Baptist relief effort and related matters, as well as downloadable photos and video, visit www.mbc.org.

SBC CP down for month

NASHVILLE, TN (BP) — Contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) for August were \$15,781,668, which was 15%, or \$2,863,090, below the \$18,644,758 given in July, and 3.6%, or \$596,049, below the \$16,377,717 received in August 2004, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. Year-to-date contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program are up 1.7% compared to the same time frame in 2004. As of August 31, the year-to-date total of \$179,443,550 for Cooperative Program (CP) Missions is \$2,973,810 ahead of the \$176,469,734 received at the same point in 2004. Designated giving of \$183,291,228 for the same year-to-date period is one percent, or \$1,945,942, below gifts of \$185,237,171 received at this point last year. The \$4,565,441 in designated gifts received last month is \$669,223 below the \$5,234,664 received in August 2004, a decrease of 12.8%. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$179,443,550 is 106.85% of the \$167,934,886 budgeted, or \$11,508,664 above budget to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. The Cooperative Program total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships for distribution according to the 2004-05 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget.

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MAKING PREPARATIONS — Becky Greenleaf (left) and Al Jernigan help prepare beds at Broadmoor Church's shelter for Hurricane Katrina evacuees in Madison. (BP photo by Norm Miller).

Miss. Baptist churches open hearts, shelters

JACKSON, Miss. (BP and local reports) — Hurricane Katrina is washing away denominational barriers as the sweeping current of human needs swells in the Jackson area. According to local officials, the 600,000-population metro area has jumped to 1.2 million in the wake of Katrina's wrath, with Christians of many groups and denominations working together in the name of Christ to stem the tide of pain and loss.

Broadmoor Church's Christian Life Center in Madison was abuzz on Sunday night, Sept. 4, with the shrieks of children playing, adults jabbering, and televisions blaring, but Ann Southerland maintained a calm demeanor and broad smile when the telephone rang, interrupting her conversation with a family checking into the center.

Southerland is a member of First Church, Jackson, and also a Red Cross volunteer who trained with members of Broadmoor Church in disaster relief shortly after Hurricane Ivan hit the Gulf last year.

"Since I was trained with Broadmoor members, they sort-of adopted me to their relief center," Southerland told Baptist Press.

"Do you have any clothing or basic food-stuffs?" one woman asked Southerland. "We don't know how long we're going to be here. Do you have any commodities we could have? We left Metarie [La.] without anything. What about food staples like rice or potatoes or canned goods we could have? Me and my husband are on Social Security and our checks were mailed to our home, but we have no way of getting there now. My husband's over in Lafayette [La.] with our older daughter," the woman related, hardly taking a breath.

Southerland smiled as she dropped toothpaste, shampoo, and other personal care items into a plastic bag for the woman.

Helping Southerland on the 6 p.m. to midnight shift was Charles Zundel, a member of a nearby Catholic church. "At a time like this, it just doesn't matter," said Zundel, referring to the differing church memberships. Zundel's wife is a member of Broadmoor Church.

In the adjacent gym, where cots and inflatable mattresses dot the floor, new sheets below as Al Jernigan and Becky Greenleaf prepare the beds for new arrivals. Both are members of Colonial Heights Church, Ridgeland.

"Any way Christians can minister — I think that's what we're called to do. We're called to stop doing what we think is important and to take care of the other more pressing needs for these people."

Broadmoor's efforts also helped the neighboring Parkway Pentecostal Church when that church sent two 50-passenger buses to New Orleans to pick up 100 Superdome refugees.



HELPING VICTIMS — Ann Southerland sorts through donations during her 6 p.m.-midnight shift at a shelter for Hurricane Katrina evacuees at Broadmoor Church, Madison. (BP photo by Norm Miller)

Red Cross officials in Jackson called Broadmoor Church asking if the shelter had any spare disaster relief supplies. As it happened, Broadmoor Church had two tractor-trailer loads of supplies, several hundred pounds of donated clothing, and plenty of food.

Parkway Pentecostal Church had stepped out in faith by sending the buses, but had no provisions for the 100 evacuees who would be arriving there. So, Broadmoor Church sent more than enough supplies for the evacuees to have clean clothes and a hot meal after the trip from New Orleans.

Meanwhile, at the downtown Jackson site of First Church's shelter, Richard Bush, a student from the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson, checks the bandage on Nancy Whitehead's hand. Whitehead is well past retirement age, and had fled to Jackson from Slidell, La., one of the areas hardest hit by Katrina.

"I came up here to help out where I can," Bush said, "and not just medical stuff, but I've been moving bottles of water and everything else."

Bush said he stepped forward because of "God and His guidance. You're always blessed when you help other people. I guess that's the reward you get for following God's lead."

Officials at the health and human services center of Jackson called and asked if First Church would be willing to be a special needs facility, Bush explained, saying the elderly and infirm who were evacuated from nursing homes along the Gulf Coast were in another Jackson facility that had no power and, thus, no air conditioning. So First Church swung into action and so did Bush.

First Church members Don and Sara Williams came to the shelter with their three children, ages 11, 13, and 15. "We want to show our children how to be Christ to others," Sara said.

"They live in a culture of 'me,'" Don added, "and this is an opportunity for them to witness service in Christ's name." Don noted all three children were helping in the

shelter, one sorting and folding the mountains of donated clothes and two playing in the game room with evacuees' children.

"We're all getting to see the reality of our faith in human terms, and to see how a smile, a touch or some kind words can really make a difference," Don said. "This sort of thing almost makes you feel guilty about feeling so good to serve others in need," he added.

Grace Williams, age 15, told Baptist Press, "I love helping" as she flipped the tag in a shirt to check its size.



GETTING ORGANIZED — Grace Williams (left) organizes and folds donated clothing at a shelter for Hurricane Katrina evacuees at First Church, Jackson. Volunteer Jane Young is in the background. (BP photo by Norm Miller)

"I've known the Lord officially or whatever since I was six but I rededicated my life to Him last year for, like, seriously. My help is a result of that. This is like a coming back kind of thing."

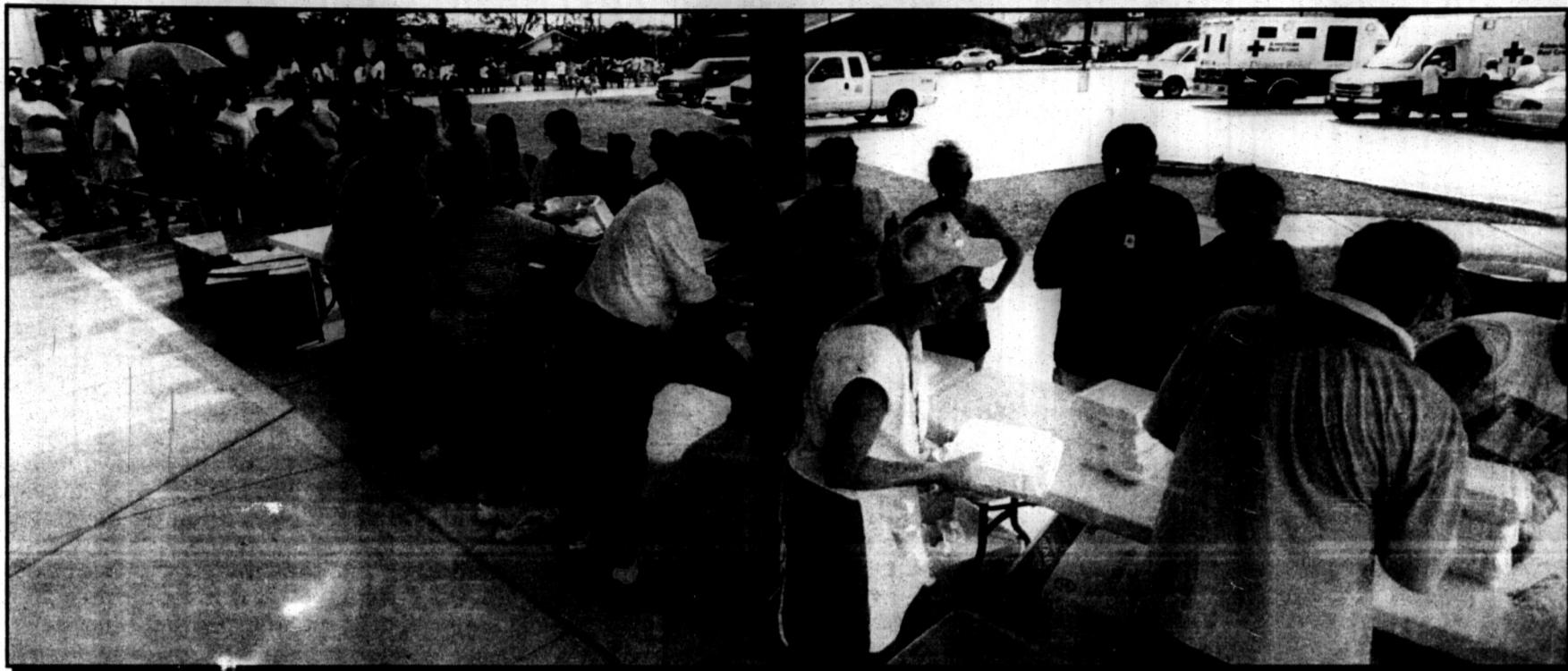
Grace wants to encourage other teens to get involved, saying, "It's very rewarding to help other people." Mentioning, for example, an eight-year-old girl who'd worn the same dress for a week, Grace said it was fun "to help that little girl find some new clothes."

Volunteer Jane Young said one of the shelter residents was in her Sunday School class, angry and asking, "How could a loving God do this?"

"Sometimes the good have to suffer with the bad. And in the process of that we grow closer to God. And hopefully in that process we can influence others to come to know God in the way that we do," Young said.



Hurricane victims look to Baptists for help



HURRICANE RELIEF — Katrina victims queue up at First Church, Pascagoula, for a meal prepared by one of the many Southern Baptist feeding units currently in Mississippi. While the Mississippi Baptist feeding unit is operating from First Church, Biloxi, the feeding unit at First Church, Pascagoula, is being manned by Georgia Baptist disaster relief volunteers. (BP photo by Sherri Brown)

PASCAGOULA, Miss. (BP) — The hurricane shutters still cling tight to the second-story windows but the entire first floor, including the exterior walls, are missing. Beach Boulevard in Pascagoula has been the showcase for beautiful homes overlooking the coastal road. Judges, businessmen, and even Mississippi Senator Trent Lott have called this street home — but not anymore.

Entire floors are missing from homes, while others have nothing but a foundation and rubble. Clothes dangle from trees, pieces of broken china dot the roadsides, and swimming pools are full of brick, broken lumber and mud.

Closer to downtown, the destruction isn't as obvious. Homes are intact, with trees down and some roof damage. The locals compare stories as they stand in line waiting for food at First Church, Pascagoula.

"I had six feet of water

and mud in my house," one woman said. "I only had three feet," another said, "but my daughter had water all the way to her attic."

Local officials estimate 90% of the homes had at least some damage. It will be months and even years before the damage is repaired. In the meantime, rescue workers and residents are dealing with the lack of drinkable water. Sanitation issues are at the top of many lists.

"We've got to get some water in here. We don't have water to drink, but we also can't flush toilets," said Dennis Ray Smith, associate pastor of First Church, Pascagoula. Rumors fly that water trucks are on their way but no one knows when or where.

Disaster relief volunteers are making do with the little water they have available. "We brought some with us and we heat it to wash the dishes and use it for cooking," said Gwen Newman, a

volunteer from Union Baptist Church in Winder, Ga.

"I know down the road we'll be OK but I just can't grasp it all right now," Smith said. "I don't know what's going to happen. Where are people going to live? Even if they could go to work, how would they get ready for work?"

Northrup Grumman, a shipyard that is one of the largest employers in Mississippi, is headquartered in Pascagoula. It is shut down and no word has come to this town about when or if the 12,000 employees can return to work.

Disaster relief teams from Georgia provided a meal Wednesday afternoon for 3,000 people. On Thursday they began serving two meals a day to people who come to the church for food, as well as 4,000 meals for delivery to Red Cross shelters. Cleanup and recovery units have collected more than 300 requests for help.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Elaine Bryant, a member of Providence Church in Rico, Ga. "They're desperate. They've got three or four feet of

mud in their houses, they have little children and nowhere to go. They're so appreciative of what we can do."

David Stewart, a homeowner who lives on the same block as the church, was one of the first to receive help from a cleanup and recovery unit.

"I've got a 40-foot pecan tree down in my yard and on my house. These guys are great. They're cutting the tree and they put a tarp on my house. They've worked all day. It's just wonderful," Stewart said.

Disaster relief volunteers will be needed in the coastal Mississippi area for at least another couple of months, said Kay Cassibry, executive director of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, from her post in Pascagoula.

"We'll need feeding units at least until everyone has electricity and water, but we'll need cleanup and recovery for a long time," she predicted.

SBC opens database

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is offering a free online service to aid those displaced by Hurricane Katrina to reconnect with their family and friends. The Survivor Information Database, at www.SBC.net, is available for those searching for persons displaced by the hurricane and for those who were displaced to alert family and friends as to their condition and location. The service should be a good means of communication, according to Chris Chapman, director of information systems for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and manager of the website. "All of the information in the database is available to the public, so people using the Survivor Information Database should only include phone numbers, e-mail, or personal information that they want published," he said. "But, we know that a large number of people are searching for their loved ones, including Southern Baptists and their families and friends, and this resource might help them reconnect with each other." Officials estimate that over one million residents of the Gulf Coast will be unable for months to return to the homes they evacuated because of the hurricane. About half of those displaced are from New Orleans. Southern Baptists compose a considerable portion of the populations in states most impacted by the devastation, making up about 34, 33 and 18 percent respectively, of the residents in Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

THE BAPTIST
Record

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Looking back

10 years ago

A 10-member task force has been appointed to implement the massive restructuring of Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) agencies approved by messengers to 1995's SBC annual meeting.

20 years ago

First Church, Hattiesburg, sponsors the first 10 kilometer "Run for World Hunger" run/walk event, in observance of the Southern Baptist Convention's annual emphasis on world hunger.

50 years ago

The top ten churches in total mission gifts in the first nine months of 1955 are Jackson, First; Jackson, Calvary; Columbus, First; Meridian, First; Gulfport, First; Picayune, First; McComb, First; Laurel, First; Jackson, Parkway; and Tupelo, Calvary.

DISASTER READINESS
AND RESPONSE

Disasters by the very definition are unknown, unexpected, and uncontrolled. When Hurricane Katrina hit the coast of Mississippi and Louisiana, the nation entered into a disaster experience unequaled by any in her history. It is not that we did not know that the hurricane was coming, but this one was different. Its size, furious power, slow forward movement, enormous storm surge, and torrential rains made it a storm that would overshadow the former monster named Camille. I am going to leave all of the bickering and debate over what "should of, could of, and would of" up to the Republicans, Democrats, and anyone else who wants to get in on the talk of why the levees weren't secure, the evacuation plan more effective, the slowness of the military's arrival to keep law and order, and many other issues — what I can tell you is what Mississippi Baptists and all of our brothers and sisters that make up the Southern Baptist Convention did both in readiness and response.

How do you prepare for every possible unknown, unseen, and uncontrolled eventuality in life? It is easy to talk about now, but it is impossible to do before. I think about the man who began to be so concerned about having a flat tire and using his spare. What would he do if he had two flats? So he bought an extra spare tire. As his thought process continued he realized he had four tires on his car and he ended up with four spare tires in his trunk just in case, but bless his heart he continued worrying about one of the spares going flat.

Wisdom dictates and even demands that some meaningful preparation be made for life's harmful possibilities. That is why people carry insurance, and it is also why here in Mississippi and across the SBC a network is set up and prepared to respond with help, care, and stabilization for people in a disaster. It could be a flood or 9-11, a tornado or a hurricane. The system immediately goes into effect. To talk about it or even to encourage people to be a part of a disaster organization apart



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board



YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (*I have sinned.*)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (*I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.*)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

from a crisis is often just whistling in the wind. When disaster comes we all realize that preparedness is a good thing and wish that even more was in place in order to respond, coordinate, and effectively manage whatever is needed to help the people in the disaster.

In the case of Katrina as it roared toward the Southern Coast of our land, Southern Baptists were poised to respond and almost before the wind stopped blowing our caring feeding units were on the ground in the most devastated areas preparing hot meals and providing water and hope for people who had lost everything. While Mississippi folks were in their place, they were not alone. Disaster teams and feeding units came from across the land to carry out this ministry of caring in the name of Jesus.

Almost immediately Baptists from every state were here. Men and women came from everywhere to make a difference — the West, North, Northeast, and Southeast. They blanketed the state in the most devastated areas, and not just on the Coast. The fierce eastern side of the eye of the storm marched up through our state crippling Hattiesburg, Laurel, Jackson, Meridian, and then even beyond those northern points. The disaster feeding unit that came in support of Meridian, so far removed from the Gulf, fed 23,000 hot meals on Saturday following the storm. The entire Southern Baptist Convention disaster relief network covered the southern part of Mississippi and many places across Louisiana. To visit one of these units is to see the compassion of Christ in action. At the end of the week these Southern Baptist feeding stations had provided over one million hot meals to the hurting, bewil-

dered victims of the hurricane. Of course, there were other organizations and feeding units making a difference too, and beyond them there were dozens of churches and local groups that just sprang into action to start their own feedings posts. Some were reaching out to care for people who had nothing and some were taking in the hundreds of thousands of displaced people who fled the storm only to find out hours later that there was no home, school, business, or community to which they could return. They are still with us.

How do you coordinate to make a difference in such a tragedy? In some ways it is very difficult and in other ways it is impossible. In a major disaster there are usually three tracks of response. First there is the planned, coordinated response. That is what takes places with and through our Baptist network of disaster relief teams. The North American Mission Board provides incredible help and resources in overseeing, contacting, and placing these units where they are needed. A command center is set up and in this case for the entire storm event it is housed at Camp Garaywa. Because the storm had come through Jackson, all of our communication lines were out. We had no phone system, no Internet, and no way we could call out or receive information. Cell phones were useless. It was a disaster! Within days we had some connection to coordinate efforts. A truckload of water was sent to a unit that was about to run out of water. It is an incredible system, but seeing it in action is amazing.

There is a second vital response mechanism that comes from just natural relationships. It may be that someone in a church has a family member in the disaster area and knows of a need for water, clothes, diapers, or medicine. That church quickly goes into action to load up a truck or van to get those to that particular spot. These efforts cannot be coordinated by some central agency. They just happen with good sense and out of the compassion of the hearts of folks who are connected to folks they love.

A third track of response is unknown and impossible to discover or manage. It is the person or group of people who suddenly realize they need to do something and they gather a car or truckload of resources and just head out to an area hoping to find some spot where it is most needed. They do not contact anyone and may not even know to contact anyone. They just get things together and go. There is no way to manage this response, but these folks make a difference.

What do we do with these disasters like Katrina? First of all we thank God for the thousands and thousands of people who are responding no matter what track they take. Every one of them is needed. For the many supplying goods or taking up money so that we can buy supplies to help hurting people, I just say thank God for you and your gracious generosity. Furthermore, if you want to do something and do not know how to connect, you can help and we can help you help. There are churches that can partner with hurting congregations and stay with them for the long journey of recovery. There are individuals who can offer their expertise, write a check, or if nothing else simply go and say, "We are here to do whatever needs to be done." If you need help finding a place and something to do, you can call (601) 292-3206 or (601) 503-7517 and find a way to be a part of the relief effort. If you have Internet access you can go to www.mbc.org and find opportunities to help that way. You can write a check to Hurricane Relief and send it to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530, and it will flow directly to people and churches whose lives have been shattered.

While people from across the nation are seeking to help us, the most amazing thing is to see Mississippi Baptists, some of whom are victims themselves, reaching out to others to bring hope and help. While we may not be a perfect people and the system for disaster help may not be perfected to the degree that any of us would like it to be when it comes to responding in the best way to the worst events, you wonderful Mississippi Baptist folk stand in line behind no one. I thank God for you and in the love of Christ you are making a difference.

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.

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Luter mourns lost N.O. church, seeks to gather flock

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Fred Luter Jr. no longer has a home or the church building where he has preached since 1986. The New Orleans pastor has no idea where most of his flock is, nor many of his friends and family.

Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Church in the heart of New Orleans, kept an appointment to preach at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth on Sept. 6, an appointment he made long before Hurricane Katrina blew through his city.

At Southwestern, he was uplifted and encouraged as he met with family, friends and even members of his church that he hadn't seen since floodwaters invaded New Orleans.

Luter and his wife left Louisiana on a previously planned trip to Arkansas just as Katrina drew a bead on New Orleans. He said that "riding out the storm" was not an unusual pastime for him and his wife, so they only took along a few articles of clothing.

As for his church members, who number more than 7,000, Luter said he has only had contact with about 100 of them since the hurricane and flooding forced them to flee. "I miss them; I just don't know where they are," Luter said.

For a time, Luter said he felt fear as the levees broke and his city flooded, but then he said he sensed a rebuke and a challenge.

"[Jesus] looked at me and asked, 'Fred, why are you fearful? How is it that you have no faith? You've been preaching faith all these years and teaching faith all these years and telling other people to have faith. Now it's time to use some of your faith,'" Luter recounted.

He was able to find some members of his congregation during a visit to Reunion Arena in Dallas. Then some of the members of his church showed up at the Fort Worth seminary's chapel service.

"When I saw members here this morning, it just brought tears to my eyes, because first of all, I didn't know where they were," he said.

During the chapel service, Luter also saw his sister and her family for the first



PASTOR'S TEARS — Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Church in New Orleans, wipes tears from his eyes as he tells students at Southwestern Seminary that the flooding caused by Hurricane Katrina destroyed his church buildings and scattered most of his 7,000-plus church members to points unknown across the United States. (BP photo by Jonathan Blai)

time since the hurricane and flood. The pastor also had learned that his brother, Keith, had been accounted for amid Katrina's evacuees from New Orleans.

"I'm going to try between now and the end of the year to get all around and visit all of them that I can," Luter said of finding the members of his congregation who are now scattered in cities such as Houston, Memphis, and Atlanta.

"To think you could pastor a large church, have a wonderful family, wonderful home, wonderful congregation and in a matter of one day it could all be gone is just unbelievable," Luter said. "We have no place to worship, no place to come and see our folk, no home to go to."

Luter was not in a self-pitying or questioning frame of mind when he spoke of Jesus calming the storm in Mark 4:35-41.

Noting that the storms of life will come for everyone, Luter struck a triumphant and enthusiastic tone in declaring the presence and trustworthiness of God regardless of the circumstances.

"I've discovered that when trouble comes your way, that when the storms of life are raging, faith is the first area that the enemy works on," Luter said. "I must admit that watching CNN and watching Fox News and watching my city and my town and my home and my church ... under water, that my faith said, 'Now what's gonna do?'"

He said he began to lose sight of all that God has done in his life as "the enemy" clouded his mind with fear for the moment. Fear, he said, is the opposite of faith. In Mark 4:35-41, the disciples displayed that fear when a storm came

their way, Luter said, but Christians can learn from the actions of the disciples and from the response of Christ what to do when the storms of life come.

First, believers must remember the promises of Jesus, Luter said. "Romans 8:38-39 says, 'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor Hurricane Katrina shall be able to separate us from the love of God,'" Luter said.

Second, Luter said Christians should remember the presence of Jesus when the storms come. He emphasized that Jesus was in the ship with the disciples even as the storm was around them. "Jesus didn't say, 'Guys, listen. We had a good crusade. You all pack up things. I'm going to walk on water and I'll meet you all on the other side.' He didn't do that. He could have, but he didn't. The Bible says He was in the ship," Luter said.

Third, Luter said Christians must remember the power of Jesus when the storms come. When the disciples awoke Jesus during the storm, Jesus commanded the wind, "Quiet. Be still."

Jesus then asked the disciples why they were so fearful. "Always remember that when the storms show up, so does the Savior," Luter said.

Luter was introduced in chapel by Southwestern President Paige Patterson. In what has become a tradition under Patterson's leadership during times of crisis, eight seminarians took off their cowboy boots and passed them around the chapel to students, faculty and staff. Nearly \$5,400 was received for the rebuilding and relief of Luter's church in the "boot offering."

"His people have lost everything they've got," Patterson said.

Another boot offering is planned for Thursday's chapel service; it will be earmarked for the students of New Orleans Seminary, which was evacuated after the post-Katrina levee breaks flooded the campus.

President sets national day of prayer

WASHINGTON (BP) — As the nation unites for the daunting challenge of assisting Hurricane Katrina survivors, President Bush is calling for a national day of prayer and remembrance on September 16.

"Throughout our history in times of testing, Americans have come together to heal and ask for strength for the tasks ahead," Bush said during remarks on hurricane relief Sept. 8. "... I ask that we pray — as Americans have always prayed in times of trial — with confidence in His purpose, with hope for a brighter future and with the humility to ask God to keep us strong so that we can better serve our brothers and sisters in need."

In response to Bush's request for a national day of prayer, the National Day of Prayer Task Force is stepping up to promote awareness, Shirley Dobson, chairwoman of the National Day of Prayer Task Force, called on Americans to pray for all those affected by Katrina.

"As the devastation from Hurricane Katrina escalates, we at the National Day of Prayer Task Force want to express our heartfelt sympathy to the families and communities affected by this catastrophic event," Dobson said in a Sept. 6 news release. "The initial disaster, followed by the resulting floods and now shortage of water, food, medical supplies, shelter and other necessities, has been difficult to witness and in turn, comprehend."

Dobson listed several prayer requests:

- For the safety and health of the hurricane victims.
- That God will give the rescuers the physical and spiritual strength required to do their work.
- For patience for those anxiously waiting to hear from family members or for word on their homes and neighborhoods.
- For problems to be solved in peace and for order to be established in the midst of chaos.
- For the relief organizations, that they will receive enough supplies and funds to address the needs before them and that they will get the supplies distributed quickly and efficiently.
- That citizens will selflessly open their hearts and homes to the victims.

"By uniting in prayer as a nation, we can avail ourselves of the wisdom that only God provides," Dobson said.

"By petitioning Him for mercy and grace, people everywhere can be a very real and necessary part of the hope and healing. Through prayer, we can access the power of God Himself," she said.

"We have much more work to do," said Bush, "but the people who have been hurt by this storm need to know that the government is going to be with you for the long haul."

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MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS



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DEZ NRT OHPLPN OHT-
GVTNR TMHLTOOBX,
NRGN PD NRT BGNNTL
NPCTO OECT ORGBB
WTHGLN YLEC NRT
YGPNR, APJPDA RTTW NE
OTWISPDA OHPLPNO,
GDW WESNLPD TO EY
WTJPBO.

YPLON NPCENRX YEIL:EDT

Clue: L = R

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Revelation Three: Twenty.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. First Church, Columbia, recognizes their 1st-6th grade GAs. Shown are the GAs.
2. Glendale Church, Leland, recognized Bernard M. Oglesby for 51 years of service as a Sunday School teacher. Shown are Roy Webb, Oglesby, and Dick Hill, pastor.
3. Grace Church, Philadelphia, recently ordained Dennis Dontrich, Ronnie Asbill, and Eric Sharp as deacons. Shown are Dontrich, Asbill, Sharp, and pastor Chris Vowell.
4. McBee Church, Columbus, recently held groundbreaking ceremonies for their new educational building. Shown are the participants.
5. Children of Tylertown Church, Tylertown, worked at the relief kitchen at the church and made cookies for the relief workers and Entergy workers housed at the church. Shown are Mary Elizabeth Stringer, Paige Harvey, Laura Lee Dyar, Chancey Harvey, and Autumn Grier (an evacuee from Gulfport.)
6. The Women on Mission group of First Church, Columbus, provided "Kool Kollars" made from strips of fabric containing crystals that, when soaked in water, provide cooling comfort for troops serving in the Middle East. Over 3000 kool kollars have been sent.
7. Liberty Hill Church, Panola County, recognized Lewis Snider for 41 years of perfect Sunday School attendance. Shown are Jay Anderson, pastor; Snider; and Roger Crosswhite.



2. Oglesby recognized for service, Glendale Church, Leland



4. Groundbreaking Ceremony, McBee Church, Columbus



6. Women on Mission, First Church, Columbus



1. GAs, First Church, Columbia



3. Deacon Ordination, Grace Church, Philadelphia



5. GAs cook for relief workers, Tylertown Church, Tylertown



7. Perfect Attendance, Liberty Hill Church, Panola County

JUST FOR THE RECORD



8. Mission Friends, First Church, Columbus



9. Mission Friends, Parkway Church, Houston



10. Children's Choir, First Church, Morton



11. Deacon Ordination, Wallerville Church, New Albany

8. **First Church, Columbus**, recognizes their Mission Friends group. Shown are the participants.

9. **Parkway Church, Houston**'s, Mission Friends have been studying the Bramlett Relief Center in New Orleans. For their Christmas in August project the group provided personal needs bags for individuals in areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Shown are the participants; leaders are Ella Spencer, Anita Voyles, Renay Moore, Dot Fleming, and Teresa Smith. Randy Rinehart, pastor.

10. The children's choirs of **First Church, Morton**, presented the musical Holy Moses. Leaders are Gayle Alford, Monica Aycock, Barbara Ott, and Martha Smith. Shown are the participants. Earl Clark, pastor.

11. **Wallerville Church, New Albany**, ordained George Hodges as deacon. Shown are Glen Clayton, Hodges, and Horace Thomas, pastor.

12. **Cedar View Church, Olive Branch**, is hosting a community singing Sept. 17, 6 p.m., featuring The Providence Quartet. Call (662) 895-2661 for information.

13. **Providence Church, Carroll County**, will have a special service Sept. 18, 5:30 p.m., celebrating Eli Wiltshire's 50th anniversary in ministry.

STAFF CHANGES

Friendship Church, McComb, has called William Durr as youth minister. Durr, a Brookhaven native, is a graduate of Mississippi College and previously served Concord Church, McCall Creek.

Reggie Bridges has resigned as pastor of Pine Grove Church, Picayune, to accept the pastorate of **First Church, Zachary, La.** Bridges will continue his doctoral studies at New Orleans Seminary.

Cedarview Church, Olive Branch, has called Sidney L. McNeil, Jr., as music director. McNeil served as music director at Immanuel Church and is the band director at Olive Branch High School.



McNeil

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



Hamburg Church, Franklin County, recently held their VBS. Shannon Allen, director; Calvin Wactor, pastor.

COLLEGE NEWS



Enrollment at **William Carey College (WCC)** is up 10% from a year ago for a total of 3,063 students at the school's three campuses. The college also saw a record enrollment for the spring and summer of 2005.

Thomas Richardson is the new chair of the department of language and literature at **WCC**. Specializing in American and Southern literature, Richardson comes to Carey after a 34-year career at the University of Southern Mississippi. Richardson received a bachelor of arts degree from USM, a master of arts degree from the University of Alabama, and a doctoral degree from Vanderbilt where he served as a research fellow.

According to the 2006 edition of U.S. News and World Report's America's Best

Colleges, **Blue Mountain College (BMC)** was ranked in the Top Tier category of Best Comprehensive Colleges — Bachelors.



Noe 1 Engebretson, pianist and associate professor of music at the University of Alabama, will present a piano concert at BMC Sept. 20, 8 p.m., in Garrett Hall Auditorium. Free admission. For information, call (662) 685-4771, ext. 246.

Dominic Gaudiosi, guitarist, will present a concert at BMC Sept. 27, 7:30 p.m., in Gannet Hall Auditorium. Free admission. For information, call (662) 685-4771, ext. 200.

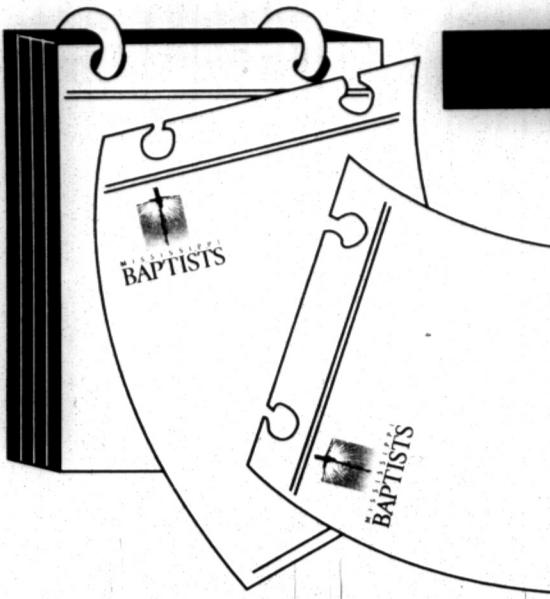
Mississippi College (MC) organists will present an organ benefit concert at First Church, Jackson, Oct. 4, 7:30 p.m. The collection taken will benefit MC students who are in need due to

Hurricane Katrina. Organists include Len Bobo, Marc Cerisier, Carol Durham, Robert Knupp, Billy Trotter, and Kathy Vail. The Quimby organ at First Church is the tenth largest pipe organ in the world. For more information, contact Robert Knupp at (601) 925-3977.



Mississippi
College

In an effort to aid those affected by Hurricane Katrina, MC is compiling a list of students, faculty, and staff with needs; contact mcole@mc.edu with information including contact numbers, specific needs, etc. The school is also developing a campus-wide relief effort, and asking for volunteers to work with Habitat for Humanity. To volunteer for Habitat, email khenders@mc.edu for more information.



The following list contains updated information on events. More events will be added to this list as soon as the information becomes available.

- * Bible Drill Clinic – Biloxi Discipleship & Family Ministry First Baptist Church, Biloxi Sept. 12, Cancelled

- Bible Drill Clinic – McComb Discipleship & Family Ministry West McComb Baptist Church Sept. 13, Cancelled
- Professional Certification & Skillshops for Ministry Assistants Pastor/Leadership Development Camp Garaywa Sept. 13–Sept. 15, Cancelled, May be rescheduled later.
- Bible Drill Clinic – Clinton Discipleship & Family Ministry Camp Garaywa, Sept. 13, Relocated to First Baptist Church, Clinton.
- 10th Anniversary Missionary Parents/ Missionary Kids Fellowship Woman's Missionary Union Camp Garaywa, Sept. 16, Postponed Moved to Spring Meeting, Apr. 21–22, 2006
- State Handbell Seminar Church Music

EVENT STATUS UPDATES

- Hillcrest Baptist Church, Byram Sept. 16–Sept. 17, Cancelled
- Mississippi Missionary Fellowship Woman's Missionary Union Camp Garaywa — Sept. 17, Cancelled
- January Bible Study Clinic Sunday School William Carey College Sept. 19, Postponed
- January Bible Study Clinic Sunday School Pike Association, McComb Sept. 20, Postponed
- January Bible Study Clinic Sunday School Lauderdale Association, Marion Sept. 22, Postponed
- Chaplains Training Evangelism Baptist Building Skyroom, Jackson Sept. 23, As Scheduled
- 4 Senior Adult Conference, Discipleship & Family Ministry Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Sept. 27–Sept. 29, Cancelled
- National Missions Weekender (Training Conference) Woman's Missionary Union Lifeway Ridgecrest Conference Center Ridgecrest, NC Sept. 27–Oct. 2, Cancelled
- Special Ministries Retreat Sunday School Camp Garaywa Sept. 30–Oct. 1, Cancelled
- Church Library Ministry Conference Communication Services First Baptist Church, Brookhaven Oct. 7–Oct. 8, Cancelled
- RA Day Men's Ministry Mississippi College Oct. 8, Cancelled

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On July 18, 2006 join your Spiritual Director, Baptist Minister Pastor Roy Meyers on this 15-day vacation including a 7-day deluxe Alaska Cruise with Holland America Line and a 7-day Pacific Northwest vacation with Your Man Tours. Devotions will be made available for those in the group who wish to participate. Pastor Myers served for 43 years as pastor of several churches in Mississippi. Currently he is semi retired and serves as interim pastor at Double Springs Baptist Church in Starkville, Mississippi. Pastor Meyers and his wife Syble took this same trip in June of 2005 serving as Your Man Tours' Baptist Hosts. They look forward to returning next year as hosts for our Baptist group visiting the land of the midnight sun during some of summer's longer daylight hours. Your group will fly into Seattle for a night before a scenic motor coach drive to Vancouver where you'll board the five-star ms Volendam. Next, travel through a wondrous maze of forested-island and glacier-carved fjords, past charming coastal villages, migrating whales and calving glaciers to Juneau, Skagway, Ketchikan and spectacular Glacier Bay. After the cruise you'll start a six-night motor coach tour with daily escorted sightseeing visiting British Columbia; the Cascade Mountains; Washington; the Grand Coulee Dam; Lake Coeur d'Alene; Montana; Yellowstone (Old Faithful) and Grand Teton National Parks; Jackson Hole, Wyoming; Idaho Falls, Idaho; and in Utah: the Great Salt Lake, Mormon Tabernacle, and more. You'll fly home after a night in Salt Lake City. Prices for this 15-day vacation start at only \$1998 (per person, double occupancy), including, port charges and taxes, lots of escorted motor coach sightseeing throughout the Pacific Northwest, the 7-day deluxe Alaska cruise, 7 nights in quality hotels, and baggage handling. Add \$500 airfare from Jackson or Gulfport/Biloxi, MS; Birmingham, AL or Memphis, TN.

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For information, reservations, brochure, and Rev. Meyers' letter call:

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MS POSITIONS

MIDWAY BAPTIST CHURCH, MERIDIAN, is seeking a full-time minister of music with some additional duties. Send resume and references to Dr. Keith Grubbs, staff search committee, 4579 Old 8th St Rd N, Meridian, MS 39307 or fax (601) 483-5491. Or email kgrubbs@gbnn.net.

FIRST CHURCH, GLUCKSTADT, Miss., seeking a music minister for Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights only. Blended worship, free-flowing format. Contact Author Comans at (601) 209-6000 or email authorcomans@aol.com.

MINISTER OF MUSIC/YOUTH: Center Hill Baptist Church, Hamilton, Mississippi. Resumes are being accepted for a full-time minister of music/youth. Send resumes to Center Hill Baptist Church, c/o music/youth search committee, P.O. Box 59, Hamilton, MS 39746.

HARRISBURG BAPTIST CHURCH, TUPELO, MISS., (Lee County) is accepting resumes for Director of childhood education to provide leadership for ministry to children in grades 1-6. Resumes should be mailed to Mr. Gary Waters, committee chairman, 506 Lake Park Drive, Tupelo, MS 38801.

REVIVALS & HOMECOMINGS

Clifton Church, Scott County: Homecoming, Sept. 18; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., followed by worship at 10:45 a.m. and potluck dinner. M. L. Wallace, speaker; Tony Henry, pastor.

Hickory Church, Hickory: Homecoming, Sept. 25; worship, 11 a.m. followed by dinner on the grounds; Hal Ethridge, speaker; Jamie Meaders, music; Frank Harmon, interim pastor.

Lucien Church, Lucien: Revival, Sept. 18–21; Sun., 11 a.m.; Mon.–Wed., 7 p.m.; Gene Douglas, speaker; Mike Britt, music; Owen King, pastor.

New Providence Church, Carthage, is canceling their annual homecoming scheduled for Sept. 18 due to disruptions caused by Katrina. The 2006 Homecoming will be the third Sunday in September.

North Morton Church, Morton: Homecoming, Sept. 18. Worship, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch and singing, 1:30 p.m. Adam Wyatt, speaker; music by locals.

Rocky Point Church, Leake County: Revival, Oct. 2–5, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Don Taylor, speaker; Dusty Rhodes and Molly, music. **Homecoming, Sept. 25**; worship, 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch; Billy Cox, speaker.

Shiloh Church, Big Creek: Revival, Oct. 7–9. Fri.–Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., regular morning worship and 6 p.m.; Kelly Smith, speaker; Charles Brasher, music.

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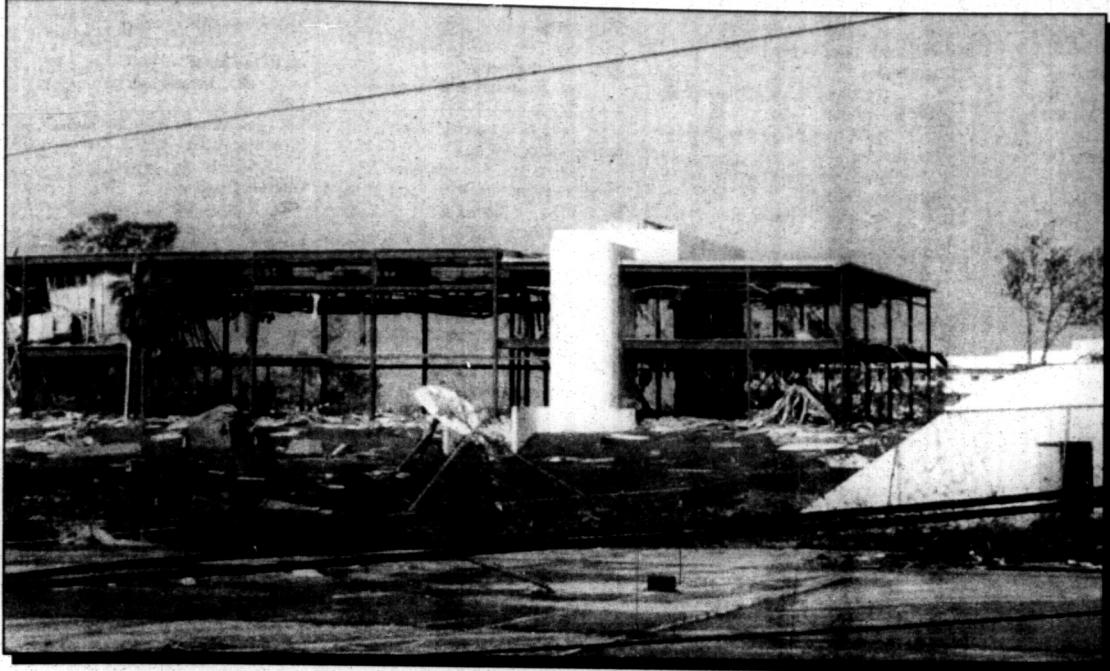
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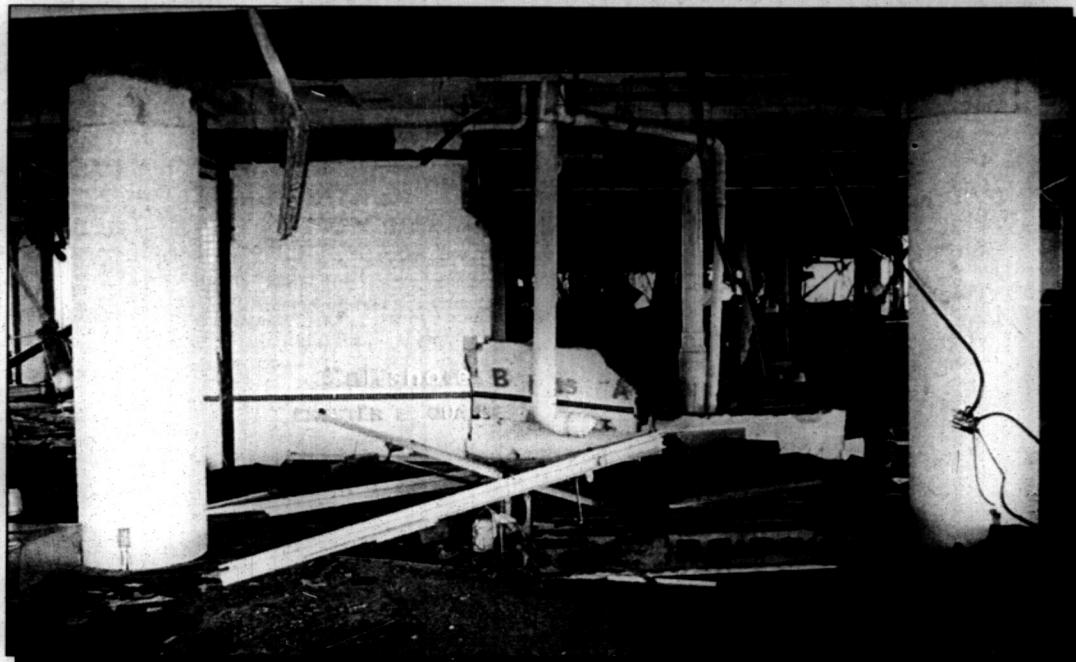
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Kelly Auditorium, looking toward beach



Ground Floor Main Lobby

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

Hurricane Katrina — August 28, 2005



Gulfshore Baptist Assembly entrance sign



Staff Housing

THE VILLAGE VIEW



Dr. Rory Lee, Executive Director

P.O. Box 27 • Clinton, MS 39060-0027
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www.baptistchildrensvillage.com

Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

BCV Needs:

Thank you to those of you who have helped provide the following special items recently: coffee pots, fry daddy's, aprons and school supplies. Our children and staff are very appreciative of your generosity.

We have 5 High School Seniors that need:

Senior Portraits, \$379.
Graduation Invitations, \$100
Class Rings, \$200
Yearbooks, \$50

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Project



The Baptist Children's Village for the 3rd year will be partnering with Samaritan's Purse, an international relief organization headed by Rev. Franklin Graham. This project provides shoeboxes filled with gifts and candy for children in need around the world. These gifts are given and the gospel is shared with children who have never received a Christmas gift or heard the truth about Jesus Christ. This project is also a mission project for The Baptist Children's Village residents. Many the residents volunteer in the relay center and are learning how important it is to serve others. The collection dates are November 14-21. For more information contact Chrystelle Thamas at The Baptist Children's Village at 601.922.2242 or cthames@baptistchildrensvillage.com or go to www.samaritanspurse.org.

Aug. 27-Sept. 9

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Dr. & Mrs. Linuel D. Jayroe
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Ms. Jessica H. Germany
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Dr. & Mrs. Linuel D. Jayroe
Dr. Van L. Lackey
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BC-Tupelo
Mrs. Evelyn Swan Ryan

The Baptist Children's Village providing for children in the wake of Hurricane Katrina

By Celeste Cade
Public Relations Associate
The Baptist Children's Village

Purity... not something you would first think of when you hear the words "Hurricane Katrina." Ironically, that's exactly what Katrina means. It is hard for our minds to understand what could be pure in something that brings such devastation. The work of a hurricane may not be pure, but our response to it can be.

We are taught in James 1:27 that "religion that God our father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

In these days after the initial impact of Hurricane Katrina, The Baptist Children's Village is continuing our 108 year heritage of answering God's call to care for those who cannot care for themselves. We are meeting their physical needs, but even more we are steering children along the S.A.F.E. Track toward Spiritual growth, Academic achievement, Family values and Emotional strength.

We have begun to receive children into the care of The BCV who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina while we have others seeking refuge in the wake of storms such as family crises. Regardless, from whence they come they are nevertheless in need.

The Baptist Children's Village has five campuses throughout the state of Mississippi that are equipped to collectively accommodate nearly 200 children.

"We were already in the process of expanding our Deanash Campus in Wiggins which is located within 30 miles of the Mississippi Gulf Coast. This new facility should be completed in the next couple," said Rory Lee, Executive Director.

Together The Baptist Children's Village with the help of Mississippi Baptists will keep children safe and provide them an opportunity for happiness, healing and a successful future.

For information regarding admission, please contact the Social Services department of The Baptist Children's Village at 601-922-2242 or ssdept@baptistchildrensvillage.com.



The new structure at the **Deanash campus in Wiggins** did suffer some damage related to Hurricane Katrina. We are moving ahead with those repairs and the completion of the building so that we can house more children near the MS Gulf Coast. Also, the Dickerson Place Campus in Brookhaven had damage to one cottage and lost 56 trees. If you or your church can help assist either of these campuses please contact Mrs. Chrystelle Thamas at cthames@baptistchildrensvillage.com or 601-922-2242.

The Baptist Children's Village

is seeking Christian couples

who feel God's call to work with teenagers

to join our ministry in the position of

Child Care Worker

on the India Nunnery Campus

in Jackson.



For more information or to request an

application please contact:

Mr. Terry Busby, Campus Life Director

601-922-2242

tbusby@baptistchildrensvillage.com

FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Put First Things First

Ecclesiastes 3:10-14; 12:13-14; Mark 12:28-34

We have discovered the dead ends that sidetrack us as we try to find purpose in life. We have discovered that fulfillment only begins through an ongoing personal relationship with Jesus Christ. However, many people today fail to recognize that Christianity is always described in the Bible, not as a past decision, but as a present-tense faith. They fail to recognize the ongoing nature of a faith relationship with Christ. This is why many professing Christians are unfulfilled and missing their purpose in life. They profess a past experience, but do not possess a life-altering present tense faith walk with Jesus Christ. How can we live day by day depending on Christ to fulfill us and give us purpose?

Learn of God, Ecclesiastes 3:10-14

We learn from verse 11 that God is **gracious**.

The Bible describes Him as the God of all grace who is gracious, merciful and ready to pardon. It is He who has graciously put the thought of eternity on our hearts.

We learn from verses 12-13 that God is **giving**. All that we have is a gift from God, for every good and perfect gift comes from the Father. God, who has purpose in all He does, gives us, as a gift from His hand, all things that pertain to life and godliness.

We also learn from verse 14 that He is **glorious**. God does all that He does to display His glory and bring Himself glory. He is a glorious God. Despite our inability to understand God's ways, His work is glori-



ously purposeful and enduring, and fulfillment in life comes as a gift of His grace.

Live for God, Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

Upon learning of God we should be motivated to live for God as well. How do we live for God? First, we live in fear according to verse 13. To fear God doesn't mean to walk around terrified all of the time. Rather, we are to reverence and honor Him. Leviticus 25:17 commands us to fear our God and Proverbs 1:7 ensures us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

We should also live, according to verse 13, in **faithfulness**. Faithfulness is simply dependability or stability. Though faithfulness is too often not a characteristic of church members, it is a characteristic of those who have been born again and sealed with the Holy Spirit, for it is one of the fruits of the Spirit.

Finally, according to verse 14, if we are to live for God, we

must live in **focus**. All of Solomon's dependence on wisdom, worldly pleasure, wealth, and work to bring him fulfillment and purpose was behind him. Such things seemed comparatively irrelevant to him as he faced the end of his life. But death was not his greatest concern. Judgment was the real issue as Solomon saw it, for God will bring every person's every act to judgment. When all is said and done, the certainty and finality of retribution give life meaning and motivates us to please God. Living with purpose and fulfillment will evade people unless and until they learn to live as they were created, to fear God faithfully with an eternal focus.

Love God, Mark 12:28-34

Living with purpose as God intends means not only learning about God, and living for God, but doing it all out of love for God. Jesus said that the first and greatest commandment is to love God with our entire being. Since the command to love God supremely is the first

and greatest command, wouldn't the most serious sin be to fail to love God with our all? Could it be that so many have no purpose in life because they love hunting, fishing, sports, cheerleading, show choirs, shopping, gardening etc. more than they love God? Could it be that so many dedicated church members have no purpose, fulfillment, or satisfaction in the Christian life simply because they love singing, preaching, teaching, fellowship, and church more than they love God? Anything that is loved more than God becomes an idol, throws us off course and leaves us unfulfilled, dissatisfied, and drifting purposelessly through life.

How can we live a life of purpose? Learn about God, but don't stop there. Live for God, but don't stop there either. Fall in love with God, and find fulfillment, satisfaction and purpose through a relationship with the lover of our souls!

Ivy is pastor of Fairfield Church, Moselle.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

"Who Needs The Gospel? They Do Too!"

Romans 2:1-11, 17-21, 23-24



Davis

Matthew 7:1 NIV says: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged." That speaks to all of us! Paul asked the Jews who judged others, who themselves were also guilty of the same accusations, if they thought they would escape God's judgment. (v.13)

Paul, being a Jew, knew that the Jewish people were special to God. They considered themselves as privileged... simply because they WERE Jews. Salvation is not based on where you were born, how smart you are, or the color of your skin. So Paul informed them that they were not to rely on God's patient and kind nature, but to understand that He was giving them the same opportunity given to all: To repent and change their sinful ways. If not, pain, distress, and unhappiness would happen to the Jews AND Gentiles alike.

The promise is that those who did good would receive

I'm patriotic. I feel blessed to live in the United States of America and consider myself a law-abiding citizen. But, I'm not more privileged than any other person in America or Mississippi.

I understand there are rules and laws that I must live by or receive due punishment.

God has rules and laws and expects his followers to obey them. As a Christian, I am responsible for my own personal actions and if I disobey God, guess what? God is the One who judges what I've done. I expect him to. Other people don't have the privilege of judging me, nor I them.

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is thine own eye?" (Matthew 7:3 KJV)

1. FAIR JUDGMENT (Romans 2:1-11)

I like Paul's words in Galatians 1:15-16 in the New Contemporary Version. "God had special plans for me and set me apart for His work even before I was born. He called me through His grace and showed His Son to me so that I might tell the Good News about Him."

In the first chapter of Romans, Paul had spoken directly to the Gentiles, accusing them of living unrighteous life styles. Like children when their siblings are punished, the Jews approved. But Paul informs them that they do not have permission to judge or condemn Gentiles, when they were guilty of doing the same things.

glory, honor, and peace; first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. (v. 10) Verse eleven clinches God's authority to judge: "There is no favoritism with God."

2. CONSISTENT JUDGMENT (Romans 2:17-21)

Paul felt confident speaking to the Jews. His study of God's laws enabled him to know exactly how they felt. He could accuse them because at one time he felt the same way. He warned them that if they felt qualified to teach others, they must remember they are also speaking to themselves.

It's like looking in a mirror. You don't see yourself and your sins; you often see someone you are accusing.

3. HUMBLE JUDGMENT (Romans 2:23-24)

No one likes being around a braggart. They talk on and on about their accomplishments and the good deeds they have done. And while what they have done is good, they already have their reward. The Jews could brag about their knowledge of God's laws. But

Paul jolted them back to reality by reminding them how easy it was to dishonor God when they broke His laws. Boasting and bragging about what we know is never as important as how we honor God by what we do. Paul's words in verse 24 are very pointed: "The Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you (Jews)." To blaspheme is a malicious act insulting and attacking the reputation of another. We can in actuality ruin a person's life. Jesus was accused of blaspheming God by admitting to be the Christ. (Matt. 26:63-65) We know the outcome of that accusation.

Although this passage in the second chapter of Romans was intended for the Jews, the same can apply to Christians today. It warns us not to judge each other or boast about our goodness. May God help us to watch how we live so we won't lead others astray. Let's glorify Him together!

Davis is a member of First Church, McComb.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

THE BAPTIST Record

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing,

and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

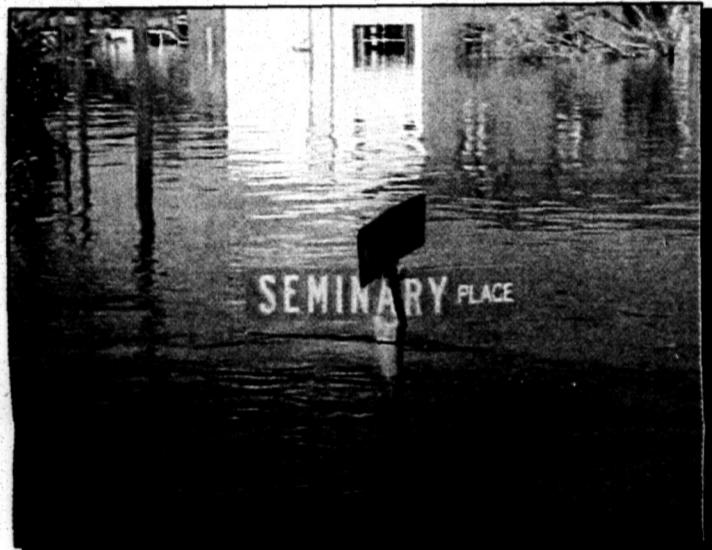
NOBTS campus flooded after multiple levee breaks

ATLANTA (BP) — New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) officials met in Atlanta Sept. 1 to begin the long process of healing from Hurricane Katrina. Providing for the immediate needs of seminary families was their top priority. "The seminary family has been deeply affected," NOBTS President Chuck Kelley said. "Our greatest concern is taking care of the people side of this tragedy."

"We're going to work on the campus and the buildings," he said, "[but] most of all we want to take care of these precious families."

Kelley started the meeting by reading from Psalm 46. The group prayed and wept. They prayed for the students, faculty and staff members. They prayed for the city and rescue efforts. The group also prayed for the many poor citizens who have lost everything.

Thirty members of the faculty, staff and administration, homeless themselves, began asking the same questions that students and employees are asking. The group split into two task forces — one to address relief efforts; the other, academic issues.



SIGN OF DISASTER — The street sign at Seminary Place and Mirabeau Avenue at New Orleans Seminary illustrates the water level on the campus. This photo was taken immediately before seminary officials evacuated on Aug. 31. (BP photo courtesy of NOBTS Security Office)

Offers of help are pouring in from churches, state conventions, and individuals. The offers include housing (some near NOBTS extension sites), clothing, and other items. The relief task force focused on developing a system of matching the needs of seminary families with the relief that is currently available and continuing to find additional aid.

The task force developed online information update forms for students, faculty and staff members. The forms will be used not only to assess needs and to gather basic information about members of the seminary family. Anyone who lived on the main NOBTS campus at the time of the hurricane is asked to complete this update. Forms will be available online at www.nobts.edu and www.sbc.net.

A separate form, which also will be available at www.nobts.edu and www.sbc.net, will develop a list of volunteers and resources. Members of the seminary staff will try to match these offers and resources with the needs of students. Those who wish to help with cleanup and repair of the campus should also complete this form.

"We already have floods of relief coming in from different people who want to help," dean of students Craig

Price said. "We are going to match the needs with the resources that are being offered."

Price said the relief task force also is working diligently to get information out to students.

Some time in the coming weeks and months the city and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will allow people to return to their homes for brief salvage efforts. This will be a time of severe grief for many NOBTS families. To help with this need, the task force plans to have counselors on the campus as members of the seminary family search their houses and apartments.

The task force also is compiling information on contacting FEMA and the Red Cross. They stressed that all on-campus students, faculty and staff, as well as those in other affected areas, should register with FEMA at www.fema.gov.

So far, the response from Southern Baptists has been overwhelming, Kelley said. But much more will be needed to care for those displaced by the tragedy. "In the midst of all of this, God has given us some wonderful blessings," Kelley said. "We believe that God is going to provide what we need."

Provost Steve Lemke urged

Baptists, "Ask your churches to pray for the faculty, staff, and students who have lost most of their earthly possessions."

Seminary officials noted that telephone lines at the North Georgia Campus are being overwhelmed by hits to the website. Steps are being taken to add a new, more capable phone line on the campus in the next few weeks. NOBTS encourages people to view the information on www.sbc.net if they are unable to access www.nobts.edu.

Kelley said he plans for the main campus to be fully operational in August 2006, and is hopeful that some activities will be held on campus as early as January 2006.

Extension center classes will continue as scheduled.

"New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is here to stay and we are getting back to work," Kelley said during the Sept. 1 meeting at the seminary's Atlanta-area North Georgia Campus. "We will have a semester. We will have a December graduation."

Kelley said the August 2006 date is contingent on a number of factors. Trustees must approve the target date during their fall meeting. The date also is contingent on the recovery efforts throughout the city; the surrounding infrastructure must be ready in order for the seminary to meet the target date, he said.

The good news from New Orleans is that all the members of the seminary family who weathered the storm are now out of the city. According to Chris Friedmann, associate vice president for operation who stayed on campus during the storm, the seminary property avoided major structur-

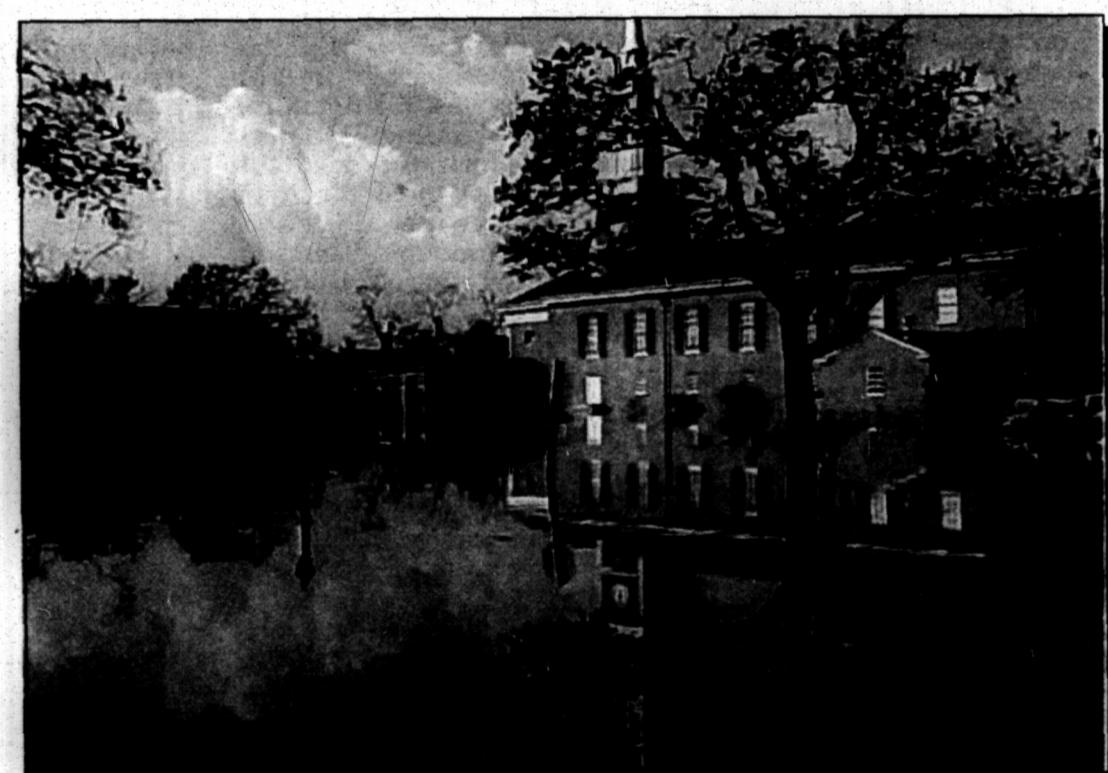


UNDER WATER — A satellite photo of the New Orleans Seminary campus indicates the extent of flooding in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent failure of the levees that protect the city. Seminary officials are moving to the school's Georgia campus to formulate a plan for reopening. (BP photo)

with Southern Baptists we can do this in a way that as much as possible minimizes disruption for student and faculty families," Kelley said. "God has given us the opportunity to see the true measure of His greatness in helping us overcome the most difficult situation the seminary has ever faced."

Kelley said the city of New Orleans needs the seminary more than ever and hopes it can play a role in helping the people of New Orleans heal and recover.

The plans of the academic task force and relief information forms will be available online at www.nobts.edu and www.sbc.net.



LANDMARK FLOODED — Leavell Chapel on the campus of New Orleans Seminary stands in floodwaters on Aug. 31, as seminary officials prepared to leave for the school's north Georgia campus. (BP photo courtesy of NOBTS Security Office)